Commemorating the Centennial of Panama

CRITICISM

Panama under the empire of Panameñismo and World War II

Dr. Celestino Andrés Araúz
Dr. Patricia Pizzurno

Panama,

N°23

our history

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In commemoration of the Centennial of the Republic

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PANAMA UNDER THE EMPIRE OF PANAMANIANISM AND WORLD WAR II

In the fall of 1939, the Allied powers declared war on Nazi Germany after the invasion of Poland, and the entire world entered a new phase shaken by the advance of Helmand's troops. Although the United States' sympathies were with England, the truth is that it initially stayed out of the conflict, although no one in Washington ignored that if the war were to drag on, its entry was unavoidable.

Meanwhile, on the Isthmus of Panama, a series of changes were taking place under President Amulfo Arias, who assumed the presidency in October 1940. His reform campaign shook Panamanian society and sparked resentment toward the United States when it opposed his demands. The constitutional reform was followed by the nationalization of retail trade, the creation of the Social Security Fund, suffrage for women, and revolutionary social laws favoring workers, among others. Finally, in October 1941, after refusing to arm Panamanian-flagged ships as Washington demanded, Amulfo Arias was deposed, and Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia assumed the presidency.

Two months later, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States entered the war, dragging Panama with it. In May 1942, the Fabrega-Wilson Bases Agreement was signed, and our country was transformed into a huge military bastion when more than 130 North American military bases were established throughout the country.

The war, as well as the growth of the American population in the country and the Canal defense projects, brought many millions of dollars into the public coffers. Unfortunately, this time of prosperity did not serve to lay the foundations for more lasting progress, and with the end of the war, the favorable economic conditions for the country disappeared. Added to this was great political instability, which led to the convening of a National Constituent Assembly in 1945, charged not only with drafting a new Constitution but also with electing a new President, Enrique A. Jiménez.

Furthermore, despite the end of the war, the United States demanded that Panama remain in some of the bases it occupied and vacate them one year after the signing of the peace agreement. In 1947, during the government of Enrique A. Jiménez, the Filos-Hines Agreement was signed, allowing it to retain some of its defense sites, but which earned national repudiation in a broad-based popular movement led by the Patriotic Youth Front.

Our Cover: Panama City with the towers of the cathedral in the distance. (Postcard from the Private Collection of Nicolás Liakópulos Falcón)

Arnulfo Arias Madrid

He was born on August 15, 1901, in Penonomé, and died in August 1988 in Miami. He completed his early studies with the French Christian Brothers in his hometown; his secondary education was in New York; and his higher education was at the Universities of Chicago and Harvard, where he obtained his Doctorate in Medicine and Surgery. Later, he specialized in Psychiatry, Obstetrics, and Endocrinology. At the age of 24, in 1925, he returned to Panama.

In the late 1920s, he joined the Communal Action Movement and on January 2, 1931, during the coup d'état perpetrated by this group against President Florencio Harmodio Arosemena, he led the assault on the Presidency.

During the government of his brother Harmodio Arias, he held the position of Secretary of Agriculture and Public Works. In 1936, Juan Demóstenes Arosemena appointed him Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the governments of England, France, Sweden, and Denmark. He remained in Europe until 1939. He also served as Delegate to the League of Nations.

Upon returning to the country and after a troubled electoral process in which the opposition candidate Ricardo J. Alfaro withdrew, he was elected President of the Republic in 1940. Shortly before, he had announced his famous Panamanian Doctrine, in which he rejected foreign interventionism and exalted national values. During his first year in government, he carried out important reformist and modernizing work that included, among other achievements: the promulgation of the 1941 Constitution; the creation of the Social Security Fund; the founding of the Agricultural and Industrial Bank and the Bank of Commerce; the nationalization of retail trade; the regulation of the practice of law; the creation of the Family Patrimony, while granting women the vote and issuing paper money after the creation of a Central Bank.

His opposition to the demands of the United States on the eve of World War II, as well as the dissatisfaction of some sectors within the country, led to his overthrow on October 9, 1941.

From then until 1945, he remained in exile. In the latter year, President Enrique A. Jiménez allowed him to return to the country, and shortly after, he was accused of attacking the Colón barracks and imprisoned for seven months.

In 1948, he founded the Authentic Revolutionary Party (PRA), which nominated him as a candidate for that year's elections. After the National Elections Jury declared Domingo Díaz the winner of the electoral tournament, Amulfo Arias and a group of followers denounced the fraud and immediately left the country. But Díaz's government ended unexpectedly in the middle of the following year with his death. From then on, a period of great political instability began, culminating in November 1949 when Commander José Antonio Remón Cantera ordered a recount of the votes from the previous year's elections and determined that Arnulfo Arias had obtained the majority of the votes.

Called to occupy the presidency of the Republic for the second time, he remained in office until May 10, 1951, when he was overthrown for the second time, after putting the 1941 Constitution into effect. Tried by the National Assembly, he was found guilty and was deprived of his political rights for life. In the midst of this adverse situation for its leader, the Panameñista Party emerged.

In 1960, President Roberto Chiari restored his political rights and allowed him to legalize and register his party. Four years later, he was once again a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, against the candidate supported by the National Guard and the government of Marco A. Robles, who won despite allegations of fraud and irregularities. In 1968, he participated for the fourth time as a candidate for the presidency, but on this occasion the National Guard recognized his victory

He assumed his third term on October 1, 1968, but it was the National Guard itself that overthrew him eleven days later.

Between that year and 1978, he lived in exile, first in Mexico and then in Miami. In 1984, at 83 years of age, he was the presidential candidate of the Democratic Opposition Alliance (ADO), but once again the military vetoed his rise to power, causing a scandalous fraud that gave victory to the official candidate. Four years later, he died in exile in Miami.

Arnulfo Arias Madrid

SPEECH DELIVERED BY ARNULFO ARIAS MADRID ON DECEMBER 21, 1939, IN WHICH HE OUTLINED THE PANAMANIAN DOCTRINE.

Your Excellency, Mr. President of the Republic, Secretaries of State, Citizens

On October 23, while in Paris, I received a cable with the news of the high nomination I had received from my fellow party members of the National Revolutionary Party, meeting in Convention in Santiago de Veraguas. Upon accepting such an honorable nomination as candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, I sent the following cable

"Upon accepting the high office you have granted me, I do so aware of the great responsibility that the position entails. I promise to continue the patriotic and progressive work of the present Administration, striving to put into practice with the exemplary scrupulousness of Dr. Juan Demóstenes Arosemena the points that inform our program. I will not disappoint the trust placed in me by the party. I hope that the citizens, today as yesterday, will give the Party their full support supporting it with decision and firmness.

On October 29, the Convention of the Conservative Party, on November 4, the Convention of the National Liberal Party, On November 11, the Democratic Party Convention and on the 23rd of the same month, the United Liberal Party Convention were kind enough to honor me with their complete and unlimited trust by nominating me as a candidate for the Presidency of Panama.

I wish here, gentlemen, to personally and publicly express to the Directors, Convention members, and other members of these Parties my profound gratitude for having heard the patriotic call for conciliation, harmony, and union made by Dr. Arosemena.

I, like him, believe in the absolute necessity of cooperation and national unity, in which all prominent minds and all the vital forces of the Nation must take part

And by accepting the candidacy that the listed Parties spontaneously offered me, I have done so convinced that the Panamanian people, as one, from one end of the Republic to the other, backs, defends, and supports said candidacy; since it is not about Arnulfo Arias, a simple citizen whose duty is to serve the Homeland at all times and under all circumstances, but about something more significant, more real, more lasting than my mere being.

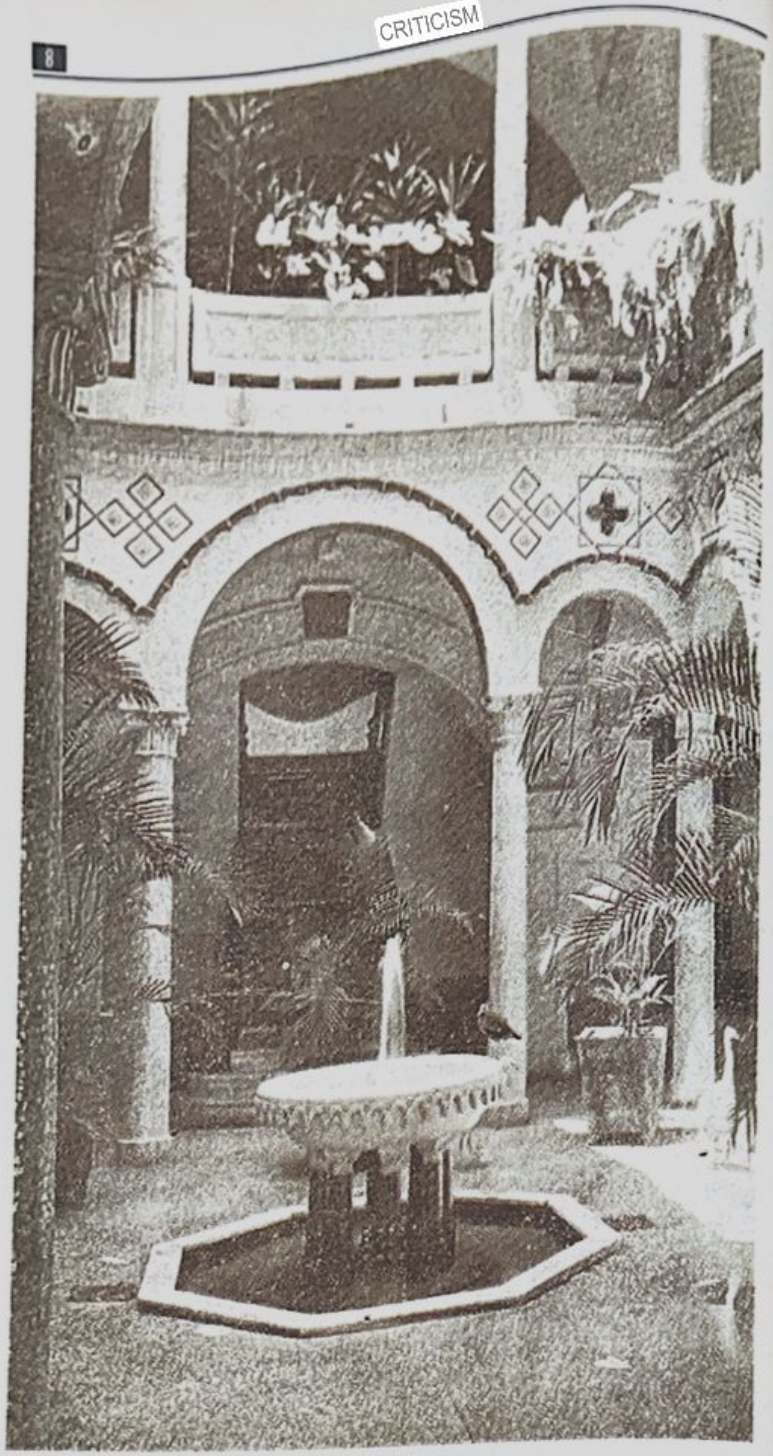
Augusto S. Boyd

It is about, gentlemen, the profound renewal that our Republic has undergone in recent years and that must continue its agile march forward with its constructive, decisive, energetic, firm, and resolute acceptance toward the perfection of the basic democratic principles.

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES.- These democratic principles have deep roots in our heritage, our idiosyncrasy, our education, and we will defend them with our lives if necessary so that anarchic subversion or reactionary demagoguery from other lands or regions does not sprout from our national soil

We are now mature enough to need imported doctrines, creeds, or tutelage.

Here in Panama, only one creed, one doctrine, one guiding force should exist, germinate, and develop: our Panameñismo



Spanish Patio of the Presidential Palace
(Panama and the Canal Zone)

Bella Vista Street in the 1930s (Panama and the Canal Zone)

Healthy, serene Panamanianism, based on research and the study of our geography, our geology, our flora, our fauna, our history, and our ethnic components. Only in this way can we achieve the excellence of well-balanced institutions and the perfect government that produces the greatest possible happiness, the greatest possible security and social and political stability.

Let us stop wasting the Nation's precious time. What remains of the present administration and the short years of the next administration will mean a lightning bolt in the historical process, and therefore it is our duty to take advantage of them by using all our time, our efficiency, and our will in favor of the State.

Let us remember that the patriotic citizen, the true Panamanian, is the one who wishes to serve Panama, not the one who wishes to use national institutions for bastard ends and personal gain.

THE WORK OF SMALL PEOPLES.-

But to reap the rewards, we must sow, fertilize the soil with the sweat of labor, and stimulate our nationalism with faith in our great destinies. It is not enough to preach; let us act; Enough of the poetry that promises; let us undertake the life-giving work and build concrete projects. Stubble cannot flourish.

Let us not be intimidated by our poverty of gold or the sententious phrases of pessimists defeated by life, for they secretly envy the spark of the idealist and the dynamism of the builder.

Is our country small?

Everything great that exists is the work of small peoples, or of great peoples when they were small. If it weren't for culture, for the efforts of small peoples, the great peoples and powerful nations of today would not exist. This is not an arrogant or boastful assertion, nor a pretentious paradox. It was little Greece that gave just laws and democratic principles to the world, that created philosophy, art, and science. The smallness of Spain and Portugal embraced five parts of the globe. Holland barely had land for its children and stole half of its current territory from the sea and channeled its salty waters to serve its economy and national defense.

A great statesman has said that the politics of nations are determined by their geography, and thus we have seen civilizations form around great rivers in strategic locations for trade or war; these fruitful civilizations have been forged by the impulse of intelligence and courage.

Panama Fire Department
(Panama and the Canal Zone)

and the capacity for work of the units that comprise them. We can do the same here on the Isthmus, a link between the Americas, trying, of course, not to distort the components of our personality, so rich in traditions and so picturesque in its Indo-Spanish history.

This point I have just touched on is of great importance in these current moments when a suicidal war has just broken out between several nations called directives driven by economic impositions and excessive ambition.

No one is responsible for their own improvement and conservation except for the community itself, and if our pace of development and progress does not accelerate and acquire a greater degree, we will fall behind other countries in the Americas.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY OF PANAMA.-

The countries of the world are deeply concerned about the current chaotic international situation. In proportion to their resources and without taking sides in the armed conflict, all feel encouraged to alleviate the suffering and misery of the peoples who have been dragged into the carnage whose young and courageous blood irrigates the battlefields of Asia and Europe. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with his uncommon vision, anticipated the events and, in order to unite the different countries of the Americas into a spiritual bundle, conceived and put into practice without hesitation his Good Neighbor policy, synonymous with law, justice, and humanity. This new policy of the great Northern Nation constitutes a ray of hope in these days of excesses, abuses, and despicable acts.

For us Panamanians, it was crystallized in the Arias Roosevelt Treaty, which, if it does not fulfill all the aspirations of Panamanians, at least greatly alleviates the situation that existed when the onerous articles of the 1903 Treaty were in force

As far as Panama is concerned, she has always been willing to harmonize mutual interests, and the next administration will contribute to perpetuating the cordiality and harmony that has lately, as I have explained, been strengthened between that country and ours. We do not despair of the dawning of an era that will destroy prejudice, envy, and the excessive greed of individuals and nations and establish a permanent atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect.

Juan Demóstenes Arosemena

Meanwhile, our sympathies cannot but be with those peoples who prefer to fight rather than submit and fall under the heel of the conqueror.

A SELECTION FROM THE PARTY PROGRAMS.

The programs adopted by the Parties that nominated me are wise but vast, and will require the entire lifetime of a citizen to put them into practice. As our system

Republican wisely establishes the periodic succession in power, I will limit myself to extracting from each of them the points of most urgent and pressing application.

THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM.-The economic problem is for nations, as for individuals, of vital importance. The security and happiness of the associates require a balanced economy based on our own production, which will alleviate and perhaps balance the enormous disparity between our imports and exports and which, in one way or another, will stimulate investments from foreign and national capital. A country that produces less than it consumes will never have independent life. Let us unite in a common effort to increase our production, taking special care, now that private capital is small and controllable, to look after the present and future interests of the workers and, above all, the present and future collective interests, which in economics, as in everything else, must take precedence over the interests of individuals

The capital invested in our territory will receive encouragement and guarantees for its development; all we desire is that it be subject to the legal precepts of the country, respecting and fulfilling them. In those productive activities where private capital is elusive or timid, it is the duty of the State to organize industries, establish modest factories, and institute cooperatives to ensure markets for agricultural products. Thus, at the same time as the production of essential goods, work and occupation will be provided to thousands of Panamanian families who long to feel free from economic worries and experience the pride of being a productive unit of the Nation.

To achieve this goal, primary education will be supplemented, and the Professional School and School of Arts and Trades will be enlarged and modernized, with the aim of preparing future technicians. Dr. Arosemena did much for Public Education, and little is still lacking in the Normal and University branch will be completed and perfected, since these branches are no less necessary and important than those we have just mentioned.

→ Enrique A. Jiménez

DESIRABLE IMMIGRATION FOR PANAMA

A well-known townsman writes that the "standard" of living of a town has three major variables: the population, the fertility of the land, and the technical arts of use. The human factor is naturally the most important; it is the factor that gives independent life, sufficient strength to the population, and precisely this is the reason why the lack of development of various national activities is obvious, since the quality and number of inhabitants is closely related to economic production, distribution, health, and ultimately, to all aspects of human existence. Our rich and unexploited natural resources await arms, intelligence, and capital. But the immigration we desire must meet certain physical and moral requirements and come prepared to share with the noble and hospitable Panamanian, the riches that both will extract from the bowels of the earth. Welcome will be those who come to our workshops to introduce their art and teach their trade, to promote industries, and above all, welcome will be the farmer who comes to open furrows in our native land.

PANAMANIANISM.- Immigration by force will be regularized, graduated according to our absorption capacity, and the immigrant must be admitted with the spirit and purpose of obeying our laws, respecting our traditions, and learning "Panamanianism." We will not encourage immigration under the simple pretext of increasing our population, and special care will be taken not to aggravate professional rivalries. Nor will supposed immigrants who come to our door with the sole purpose of exploiting us, propagating and imposing ideas, enjoy the liberality of our laws, our hospitality, or our republican institutions

Ana Matilde Linares de Arias

antidemocratic or create minority problems similar to those that exist in other countries. Before beginning such a transcendental and delicate task, it is fair, since charity enters the home, to relieve our needy classes by providing them with duly paid work that eliminates a precarious and narrow life. It is necessary to raise the standard of living of the worker and the peasant, offer them opportunities for improvement, and ensure that they are not exploited. But at the same time, we must instill in our citizens that if the sun shines brightly on our land, if life is fertile due to the benefits that the homeland provides us, we should not allow the environment to be debased by idleness and vagrancy. Every right implies a duty, and the inescapable duty of Panamanians is to work both for themselves and for the homeland.

Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia

He was born on March 14, 1899, and died on December 29, 1969. He was Governor of the Province of Panama in 1936, and two years later, he served as Superintendent of the Santo Tomás Hospital. Minister of Government and Justice during the first presidential term of Arnulfo Arias, he replaced him as president after the coup d'état of October 9, 1941.

He was President of the Republic during World War II and, with the help of the United States, led the war to the Axis powers. He held the highest office until May 1945, when the National Constituent Assembly elected Enrique A. Jiménez as provisional President.

During his administration, the Fabrega-Wilson Bases Agreement was signed, by which Panama leased 134 military bases or defense sites throughout our national territory to the United States for the defense of the Canal.

In 1971, journalist Gil Blas Tejeira published a comprehensive biography of former President Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia.

PROCLAMATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, RESOLUTION AND LAW OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PANAMA ON THE EXISTENCE OF A STATE OF WAR BETWEEN PANAMA AND JAPAN, GERMANY, AND ITALY. (December 7, 8, and 10, 1941).

1. Existence of a state of war between Panama and Japan, Germany, and Italy

a) Proclamation of the Executive Branch

The Government of the United States of America has officially informed the Government of Panama that today, the military forces of the Imperial Government of Japan unexpectedly attacked the United States military bases located in Hawaii and the Philippines. This attack took the form of an aerial bombardment that caused a significant number of deaths and other damage of serious proportions.

After this treacherous aggression, carried out while the diplomatic delegate of the Emperor of Japan and the Secretary of State of the United States were conferring in Washington in an apparent spirit of peace, the Government of Japan has declared that a state of war exists between that country and the United States of America.

The Government of Washington, in turn, has been forced to declare that all war plans prepared by the United States to defend itself against the Government of Japan have been immediately put into effect.

The critical situation thus created places the Government of Panama facing a state of emergency, the gravity of which is of indisputable proportions. In light of such facts, the Executive Branch, after a careful and conscientious study of the situation and with the unanimous consent of the Cabinet Council, has come to the conclusion that the moment demands from the Panamanian Government a clear and definite declaration of Panama's position regarding this conflict. And for this reason, the government proceeds to issue this Proclamation, consistent with its principles as a purely democratic nation and faithful to its international commitments, has taken and will continue to take all measures that this emergency requires in order to cooperate in the defense and protection of the Panama Canal, whose security, as well as the security of the Republic itself, are imminently threatened by the aggressive forces of the Government of Japan.

The Panama Canal is the axis of American defense and is a project in which both the Panamanian nation and the United States have a joint and vital interest, as was clearly established in the General Treaty of March 2, 1936, signed between the two countries. Article X of the Treaty provides that, in the event of a conflagration or threat of aggression "in which the security of the Republic of Panama or the neutrality or security of the Panama Canal is endangered," the two Governments "shall take the preventive measures they deem necessary for the protection of their common interests."

In response to this situation, the Government has proceeded to intern Japanese subjects residing on the Isthmus as a preventive measure, to prohibit the export of gold or other funds belonging to the Government of Japan or its subjects who are in Panama, has declared censorship of radiographic and cable communications, and has intensified surveillance of all elements that constitute or may constitute a threat to the common interests of Panama and the United States in the security of the Panama Canal.

The Government of Panama takes this opportunity to once again make the universal declaration that Panama will at all times support the democratic principles that constitute the constitutional and republican basis of the Panamanian nation and that it will continue to cooperate with the Government of the United States in a loyal, honorable, determined, and energetic manner in this grave emergency that threatens the vital interests of both countries and also threatens the principles that all the American republics so ardently defend as an indispensable foundation for their existence as sovereign and free nations.

Panama, December 7, 1941

The President of the Republic
(signed) Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia

(The signatures of the members of the Cabinet Council follow)

John Gunther

American journalist who traveled extensively throughout Europe, Asia, and the American continent. His date and place of birth are unknown.

His notable works include: Inside Europe (The European Drama); Inside Asia (The Drama of Asia); and Incide Latin America (The Drama of Latin America). The latter was published in Spanish by Editorial Claridad of Buenos Aires in 1942.

The Problem of the Panama Canal

(Excerpt from the work "Inside Latin America" by John Gunther)
December 1941

The defense of the Panama Canal encompasses four aspects: naval, air, and political—that is, the maintenance of cordial relations with neighboring countries—and the prevention of sabotage.

The land attack is almost implausible: the jungle is an impenetrable bastion. Its dense undergrowth is a marvelous natural defensive system. Rare animals, such as the tapir and others, thrive and live within a mile and a half of the Canal. In the military camps that are built eight kilometers from Colón or Cristóbal, one encounters twenty-five different species of snakes, among which there are some extremely poisonous. The Indians of the Cuna region (sic), in Darién, have never been subdued, and still carry out hostile incursions. And this entire primitive world, full of ambushes, is just a stone's throw from one of the greatest works of engineering of all time! The main objective of the United States strategy is to maintain

constant vigilance to prevent the approach of enemy aircraft or ships. Naval aviation aircraft, greatly reinforced these days, monitor all ships approaching within a 900-mile radius. Responsibility for everything that occurs within a distance of 50 kilometers from the canal falls to the Army.

The Navy deploys its reconnaissance aircraft in a fan-shaped pattern, but it cannot carry out its mission completely effectively without adequate bases, that is, strategically located places where its aircraft can perform flights in a wide arc.

In exchange for the destroyers ceded to Great Britain, the United States now has the necessary bases in the Atlantic. In the Pacific, the best place to establish a base, to the North, would be the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in Mexico; next in importance and value would be the Gulf of Fonseca in Nicaragua, where construction work has already begun.

To the South, the Navy would like to be provided with a base in the Galapagos Islands, which belong to Ecuador. The pertinent negotiations are already taking place, in discreet silence, to enable a base on those islands.

What if a surprise attack broke the naval barrier? I spent an unforgettable day visiting the Army fortifications in Panama. I saw some of the most formidable coastal batteries in the world; I saw their enormous pieces—some 16 inches, some 14 inches—hidden at the edge of the jungle. I felt admiration at seeing the ease with which a sergeant, with a single movement of the wrist, raised the monstrous cannons, as if they were lightweight toys. Since each shot costs $1,200, they don't fire often.

We penetrated the damp thicket and came across anti-aircraft pieces skillfully concealed in remote clearings in the forest. You crawl through rough undergrowth, go down a carefully constructed canal, wipe the sweat from your eyelids, look... and see no cannons. And yet, there they are, painted a dull green, oiled, covered with straw and logs, ready to go into action.

We headed down another road and found perfectly equipped detachments around batteries of searchlights, Vemos how the gigantic have 800,000,000 beams—surprise airplanes in mid-flight, and how the bombers hit moving targets with easy precision. The crews of the cannons, detectors, and searchlights are on permanent guard. The Army has hundreds of services in the Zone, and true wonders have been achieved in installing them. In what were until recently swamps and marshes, there are now landing fields; entire towns sprout from the undergrowth, as if by magic. The greatest technical difficulty is the construction of roads. Enormous obstacles must be overcome to build them. Flat land is scarce, and more work cannot be done.

To the town of Caracas (Panama and the Canal Zone)

than three months a year, after the rainy season.

Although it may seem surprising, there is no road that runs parallel to the Canal across the Isthmus. The technical difficulties that would have to be overcome are insurmountable, and on the other hand, the Panama Railroad (owned and operated by the United States Government) had the right to oppose the construction of any road that threatened its lucrative business. The Army is strongly urging the construction of a road, since an aerial bombardment could destroy the railway. President Roosevelt has recommended that the railroad company give up its rights and has already begun construction of the road. About 37 kilometers still remain to be built; but it is likely that it will be completed this year.

All Army posts are in communication with each other. Officers and soldiers live well, work hard, practice the fun sport of killing snakes, and enjoy themselves in the clearings, under the palm trees, after a trivial matter of everyone's health. The smallest pond is oiled, and beds are surrounded to completely banish malaria.

de las horas de servicio. Se cuida con esmero

de insecticida en abundancia. Se ha logrado

The prevention of sabotage is of absolute and capital importance. Suppose the Japanese were to blow up one of their merchant ships in one of the dams. Imagine that a "neutral" ship, adrift, intercepts the narrow Canal. Imagine that the Quislingos of Panama were to destroy the Gatun Lock and consequently empty the Canal. Precautions must be taken against all such eventualities. Every ship attempting to enter the Canal must undergo a thorough reconnaissance. Officers of the U.S. Navy assume command of the ship. They install an independent telephone line between the bridge and the boiler room, and a guard is posted at both ends to thwart any possibility of giving false orders. If there is any reason to suspect an attack, the ship is surrounded by netting so that no bombs can be thrown from it. No ships are allowed to cross at night. Only one of the two sets of locks is used; the other is being made bombproof.

In Panama there are 2,000 Germans, 760 Italians, and 420 Japanese. All are listed. There are warehouses owned by German and Japanese merchants. It is not known what they contain, but very special precautions are taken, especially with the locks and valves.

Last spring, work began on a third set of locks that will provide new passage for ships in case the current ones become unusable. The original locks are only 33 and a half meters wide, which has forced the United States to limit the beam of its warships. The new locks will be about 43 meters wide, which will allow the construction of larger battleships and planers. These works will probably take five years. The original canal cost $375,000,000; the new ones

esclusas, solas, costarán 227.000.000.

The American garrison there has increased from 18,000 men to a fully prepared population; Army and fleet planes stand guard constantly. Civil authorities maintain permanent surveillance. Whoever attacks the canal will find themselves with a very tough nut to crack. Don't imagine any delirious fanatic is going to blow them to pieces with a stick of dynamite.

Ofelia Hooper Polo

She was born in Las Minas, Herrera province, in 1905 and died in 1981. She obtained her primary school teaching and high school diplomas from the National Institute in 1927 and her degree in Social and Economic Sciences from the National University of Panama in 1941. She served in the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce in the field of cooperatives.

Her main works are: Aspects of Rural Life in Panama (1945) and Profiles of the Rural Man of Panama (1969).

ASPECTS OF RURAL SOCIAL LIFE IN PANAMA

Chapter IV

The Peasant Economy

1. Crops

The Penonomé Agricultural and Livestock Census contains very interesting data on the size of crops. On this topic, the census states:

"The most common crop size, both on national and private land, is between two and five hectares. 38% of the district's farms are this size.

"The majority of farmers are working on farms that do not support the family, on an area of five hectares or less, which yield little."

The size of the farms is small. The size of the crops is even smaller, since within the area fenced by the farmers, with permanent or temporary fences, there is uncultivated land.

As a general rule, farmers cultivate three hectares of land with annual crops and one hectare with fruit trees, coffee and cocoa if they live in the highlands, and coconut palms if they live in the lowlands, for their livelihood and that of their family.

Farmers measure the area of their crops by the quantity of seed sown. According to tables prepared by the Agricultural Economics Section of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, the surface measurement equivalencies for grain measurements and others used in sowing are as follows: one quart of rice or corn seed is equivalent to one hectare of land for these crops. One hectare of cassava contains approximately seven thousand plants; one hectare of yam contains 7,500 plants, more or less, and one hectare of plantain or banana contains approximately 2,500 stems.

The gardens of one quart of Rice planting and another quarter of acre of corn are the common ones. Then plantains, bananas, cassava, yams, sugarcane, and in some cases some legumes and tobacco are planted, covering an area of approximately one hectare. The peasant dwelling is on the "site" or farm of permanent crops. These perennial fruit crops constitute the site where the peasant is settled, and the name is apt. Transitional crops of cereals, tubers, and edible roots are changed each year around the "site" of fruit trees, coffee, or palm trees.

A garden of two or three quarters of acre is an exceptionally large garden in our countryside.

We must not forget that our peasants' agriculture is extensive and not intensive, so the size of the crops and their yield are not enough even to produce the entire livelihood of the entire peasant family.

Corn, cassava, some varieties of beans, sweet potatoes, squash, melons, chilas (pumpkins), chili peppers, tomatoes, cacao, pineapple, mamey, star apple, pixvae, corozos, nances, tobacco, cotton, sugar apple, soursop, and pita were plants cultivated by the Indians before the arrival of the Spanish. Centuries of patient agricultural work by the Indians reduced these wild plants to cultivation. In the four centuries in which the agriculture of Panama, like that of the Americas, has been influenced by Europeans, although many new and valuable plants for tropical agriculture have been introduced, such as rice, coffee, sugarcane, and bananas, no wild plants have been reduced to cultivation. The native cultivated plants were probably introduced to Panama from other agricultural regions. They, however, constitute a badge of honor for pre-Columbian Indian farmers.

The plants cultivated by Panamanian farmers are: rice, corn, and millet as cereals; cassava, yam, oto, and sweet potato as tubers and edible roots; chayote, chili, tomato, cabbage, and cilantro as legumes; orange, banana, plantain, pineapple, piñuela, piro, avocado, mamey, loquat, sapote, and yearling

custard apple, soursop, guava, guava, fistula cane, pomegranate, passion fruit, cherry, plum, star apple, pomegranate, watermelon, melon, chili, mangosteen, carob, tamarind, cashew, Cartagena mamey, Curaçao cashew, grapefruit, blackberry, guate, icaco, pitahaya, quince and foreta as fruits; sweet plants such as breadfruit, peanuts, panama, sesame, pixbae, ñajú and industrial plants coffee, sugarcane, tobacco, rubber, cotton and cocoa.

the abundance of fruit is the basis that for the change from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. The Canal, with its maritime traffic and the civilian and military population established for its operation and defense, encourages the consumption of fresh fruit. The stationed and transit population that the Canal brings together in Panama is offered an excellent market for the fresh fruit produced on the isthmus, a market that farmers can take advantage of to sell their fruit production. The same market exists for fresh vegetables, which is why it is convenient for farmers to adopt the practice that they do not have now of growing vegetables. However, as long as farmers do not have roads and ownership of land crossed by roads, it is absurd to induce them to grow products that they cannot sell where there are no roads, or cannot grow due to lack of land, where there are roads

3.- Agricultural work.

Field work is carried out by Men, women, and children together. In the socuela, men and boys participate; in the felling, men alone, in the burning, fencing and rafting, and boys; in the weeding, men and boys participate; even though some women do not refuse this work, in the harvest, women and children of both sexes participate again.

Among the pre-Columbian Panamanian Indians, all agricultural work, with the exception of making daros in the jungle through socuela, felling, and burning, was labor performed by women. Men waged war, hunted, and fished while the pre-Columbian Panamanian woman worked in the fields.

Today's women work in the fields today as four centuries ago, but because war has disappeared and hunting and fishing are abundant, she receives more help from her partner

Working hours are from dawn, when the farmer leaves his hut to go to the garden, until dusk, when he returns. Part of this time is spent walking, as he lives far from the fields. Work hours are interrupted at nine and three to smoke and rest under the trees, and at noon for lunch.

They sing "saloma," that is, they sing wordlessly or chant verses that become more enthusiastic when the women approach with lunch, while they work.

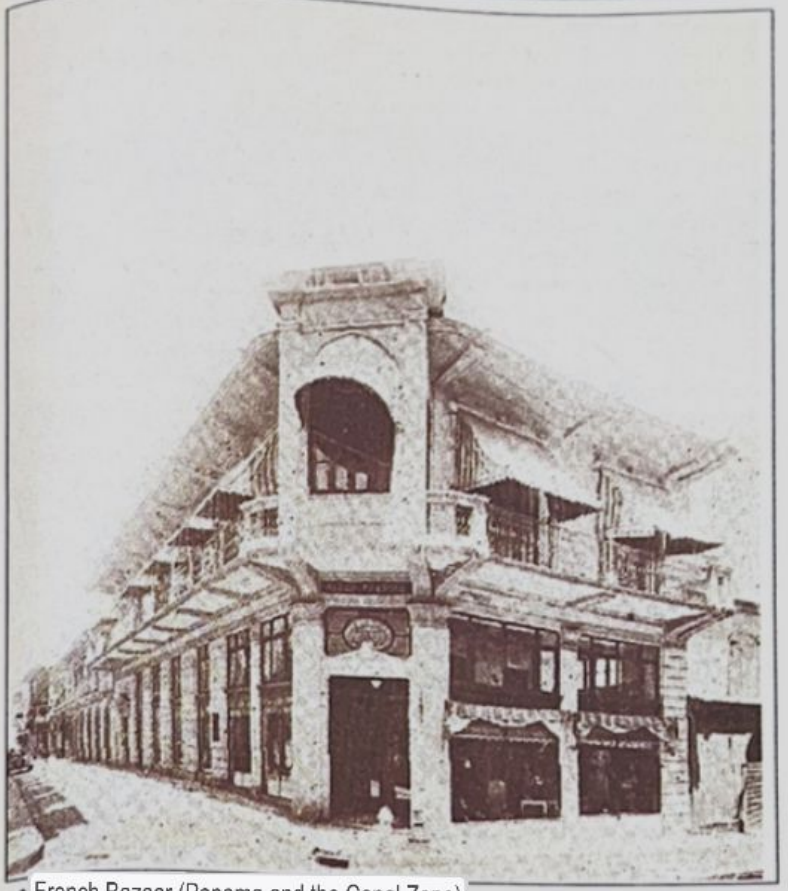
Some boys walk through the fields carrying gourds or "tulas" filled with water, chicha, or sugarcane juice, liquids that are used by the thirsty.

The Canal has excluded Panama from the group of countries where labor is cheap. The farmer cannot resort to paying day laborers for his crops

In the primitive economy of the small farmer, in which all needs are met without help from other groups, there are two work institutions to provide the labor necessary for the crops: the board and the peonada.

Both are cooperative work practices that deserve to be preserved. The board brings together dozens of small

Central Hotel (Panama and the Canal Zone)



French Bazaar (Panama and the Canal Zone)

Chitré Hospital (Panama and the Canal Zone)

farmers in the crops of the person who calls them and in a festival in which agricultural work gives rise to competitions in which the vendors gain fame similar to that of athletes in sporting events. At the end, there is a party, abundant food, and liquor in the home of the "owner of the meeting." He does not pay money for the work done but is tacitly obligated to attend the meetings of the farmers who attended his own, which he does gladly, since the meetings are social events.

The "peonadas" do not have the festive character of the "juntas." They are made up of fewer workers, since it is a short-term exchange of labor and within a week they must the "return peon," that is, work alternately of the peasants who worked in their peonada, in successive peonadas.

7.- The income of the peasant population

The amount of the farmers' annual income is revealed by the sales data of the 3,482 farms registered in the Penonomé District in 1943. (...)

The total annual sales made by the 3,482 farms in the Penonomé District reach a value of B/297,460 and the average of the annual income of the registered farms is B/85.00 per farm and B/14.00 is the annual value of the sales of the income of the farm products and the products of some small home industries existing in the region.

There is a marked contrast between the income of farmers who farm in regions with roads and the income of farmers who farm in regions without roads. In the region near the city of Penonomé, farmers' annual income averages B/. 743.00 per farm and B/. 128.00 per person. In the mountainous region where there are no roads, there are areas where the annual income of farms drops to B/. 23.00 per farm and B/. 4.00 per person.

In areas with roads, where farmers have abandoned subsistence farming and practice commercial farming because it is possible to sell agricultural produce, landowners have annual incomes that are much higher than those of farmers who do not own land. In the region surrounding the city of Penonomé, the annual income of farmers who own the land on their farms averages

a value of B/1,875.00 per farm and B/313.00 per person. In contrast, the annual income of farmers who just stay around the city of Penonomé averages B/8.39.00 per farm and B/7.00 per person.

941, los ingresos

Panama's agriculture was estimated at B/11,000,000.00. Deducting from this amount the B/2,000,000.00 from banana production, since most of these crops belong to the Chiriquí Land Company, a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company, and not to the farmers, and the half million from sugar production, since the owners of the sugar mills are not farmers, the annual income from agricultural production is reduced to approximately eight million balboas which gives an average per person of

8.-The relatively self-sufficient economy of the peasant. The

fact that the peasant has an annual income of just over B/. 14.00 does not mean that with such a meager amount of money he must pay for what is necessary to satisfy the basic needs of his existence during the year. His food, his house, his furniture, some items of clothing, certain tools for some means of transportation, a large part of his medicines, and the instruments of his primitive music are not purchased by the peasants with their annual income, but rather produced by their personal labor in a relatively self-sufficient lifestyle. Peasants produce almost everything they consume and consume almost everything they produce themselves. Where commerce is involved, no one produces all their consumer goods themselves or consumes everything they produce themselves. Where there are no roads that allow the sale of agricultural production, the fact occurs, of which the country shows no signs of being aware, that large sectors of the population of the

In the countryside, they neither sell nor buy anything, and they live in a system of relative self-sufficiency that only allows them to subsist. The land is cultivated only to have something to eat and not to participate in socioeconomic exchange or in human interdependence through the practice of trade and the socioeconomic contacts that arise from such practices

The peasant does not use money to any appreciable degree to obtain consumer goods or to obtain the elements used in his agricultural production. The typical peasant buys a machete, an axe, and a hoe every five or six years; one or two dresses of ordinary cotton each year; a blanket every few years; soap, petroleum, liquor, salt, and some patent medicines and trinkets for women's adornment; some vessels of ordinary earthenware, perhaps a pan and some iron spoons; a few nails; a hunting shotgun, gunpowder and ammunition; if lucky, an electric lantern; and, if possible, goods with products through a "cambalache" system. Soap, petroleum, and salt are generally paid for with eggs. In San Blas, the coconut is used as currency (...)

The peasants use cash for payment of religious services, clothing, medicines, and liquor. Fines, when incurred, are paid for with days of imprisonment

CHAPTER V
COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION

3.- The peasant lacks roads

The majority of the peasant population of small farmers lives in regions where the oceans, roads, or the Chiriquí railroad do not affect transportation and communications conditions.

Despite the narrowness of our Isthmus,

Atlas Garden (Panama and the Canal Zone)

A large proportion of the rural population experiences the effects of obesity in the highlands of Panama, the reserve, or the thyroid gland due to a lack of iodine-rich diet.

These regions, which do not have access to our two oceans, also do not have roads, since they run close to and parallel to the Pacific, and the regions deprived of maritime communication are also deprived of the benefits of roads.(-)

The rivers are only navigable by small boats for short distances inland.

There is no choice but to walk, travel on the back of a mule or horse, or in an oxcart where the topography of the terrain and the filling of the deep potholes in the road allow the use of this means of transportation.

Carts are limited to the group of peasants who participate to some degree in the money economy and who live in not very rugged regions. The humble peasant walks for hours, along the infernal paths they travel, carrying on their backs a modest contribution of products that still meet the food needs of the Canal Zone and the cities of Panama and Colón.

Some of these peasants' hamlets () are two days away on horseback or on foot from the district capital.

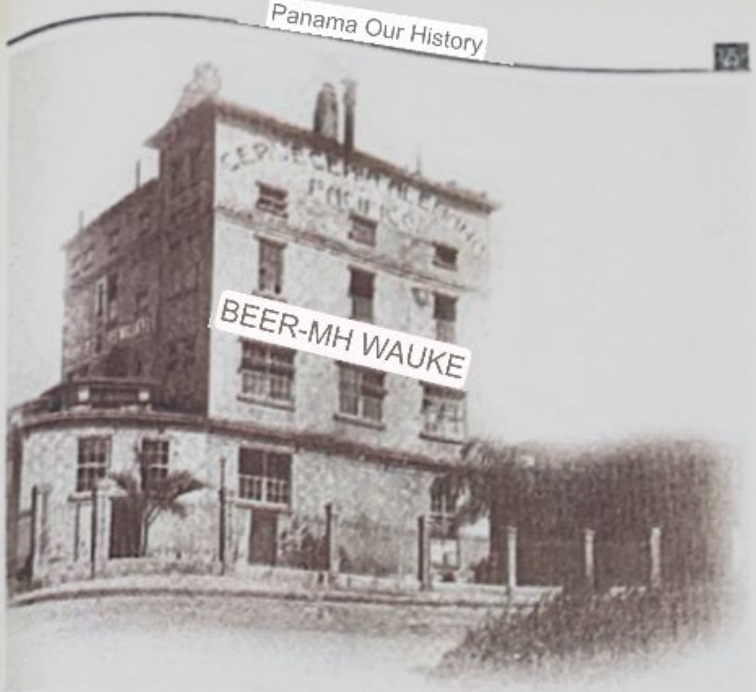
A small farmer from these hamlets must walk or ride horseback for two days to carry his products on a "motete" on his back or on his horse to the district capital, where the store of the intermediary is located, who exchanges them for manufactured products or buys them for a few cents, and another two days to return. If it is a matter of obtaining a necessary medicine, it is most likely that the sick person will die or recover before the medicine is obtained.

Before the construction of roads and the use of motor-sailers or small steamers for coastal shipping, the rural population, incorporated into the money economy, traveled only on horseback, in oxcarts, or on sailing ships.

From Pesé in the Province of Herrera to Panama City a century ago, sailing ships were preserved. Due to the insecurity of the ships and the lack of food for the cattle to cope with the risk of a calm, sailing ships were not a suitable means of transporting cattle. They were brought on foot from distances of approximately 200 miles, followed by cowboys on foot or on horseback. Transporting cattle was an adventure that lasted several months and in which the jaguars of the jungles and the alligators of the rivers frequently added an exciting note.

Pesé was not the only population that transported cattle in this way.

Today, this social group has efficient cabotage shipping, the volume of which has declined due to the construction of highways, the Chiriquí railroad, and an aviation service between Chiriquí and Panama.



German Brewery of the Pacific (Panama and the Canal Zone)

4.- The lack of communication routes as an obstacle to agricultural development.

The lack of mechanical means of transportation constitutes the number one rural social obstacle.

It is a painful but true fact that the wheel has not yet been introduced into the vast majority of rural regions of Panama, not in its modern mechanical form, nor in its primitive form of being pulled by animal traction. In the vast majority of peasant communities in the highlands of the isthmus, the oxcart and even the simple wheel of a handcart are still unknown.

The peasant does not place the wheel under his agricultural products to transport them, but rather his shoulders like a beast of burden. For this reason, the money that peasants earn comes mainly from the sale of animals, because they walk

Benedetti Brothers (Panama and the Canal Zone)

themselves to the market and solve the transportation problem. (...) The practice of animals often walking for two days and nights to go to the contributes to the fact that the animals that the peasants sell are thin, since if they were fat they would not walk, and this is the only way to get them to the market. The fat pigs that would make the peasant some money cannot be sold because if they walked in the sun they would die. (...)

Plant production, especially fruits and tubers, is almost not sold. The difficulty of transporting products and the speed with which fruits rot, which prevents them from being stored, are the causes.

CHAPTER VII Rural Education

1. Instruction and illiteracy of the peasants

(...) the illiteracy rate of the population

Wedding of President Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia and Carmen Estri

Rural population in Panama reaches almost 54%. (...)

The decrease in the proportion of illiterates is notable in the Republic during the years between 1911 and 1940, but it has not yet reached the proportions it should reach in the provinces where the peasant population is concentrated. In the provinces of Chiriquí Herrera, Los Santos, Coclé, and Veraguas, almost half or more than half of the population is illiterate. These are the provinces with the highest agricultural production in Panama.

The fact that there are more urban dwellers with primary education than rural dwellers tells us that the rural school system has serious deficiencies in the task of teaching peasants to read and write. The number of Panamanians with primary education in the agricultural regions of the country is very small, while this number is somewhat more satisfactory in the cities

3. What peasants need to know

The state of the country's economy and rural social life determines the education that Panama's farmers need.

Our rural population is at the beginning of a period of transition from one socioeconomic state to another. Today, they live in an economy of relative self-sufficiency and, in a few more decades, will live in an economy in which commercial exchange is practiced. The education that farmers need is one that helps them move from the socioeconomic state in which they live today to a less limited economy and social life and enables them to participate in commercial and cultural exchange.

Our farmers need a productive, apremio aprender práctica agricultura environment, the construction of adequate housing, bridges, and roads; the exploitation of their resources to improve their living conditions; the organization of production, transportation, and sales of agricultural products, the purchase of manufactured products, and their social life.

Facts such as those recorded in

Our rural schools for peasant children who live by farming the land and must live off of it, who take classes about the Italian Renaissance or about the telegraph or the telephone that they don't know, while they are sick with malaria and anemia and malnourished, should not happen. Such children need to be taught to prevent their own illnesses and the diseases and pests of plant and animal production and to cultivate the land so that it produces not only adequate and sufficient food for the peasant family but also money to satisfy their needs and talk to them about things they don't know and that, if their subsistence farming and relatively self-sufficient economy persist, will never happen will know.

Today, the State tells peasants, through rural schools, that they must drink milk, but it doesn't tell them how to obtain milk production from the cows they keep. It also tells them that they must wear shoes to prevent hookworm infections, but it doesn't tell them how shoes are made; it tells them that they must take quinine to get rid of malaria, but it doesn't help them change their subsistence economy, in which nothing or almost nothing is bought or sold, to an economy where exchange is practiced and quinine must be acquired by purchase. The rural population needs to be educated to do the many things they need to do well, not to speak and memorize. In other words, peasants need to be educated in many things they must do, in "how" they should do things and "why" they should do them, and to be given technical, financial, and moral assistance to do them. The general philosophy, methods, and results of the rural improvements undertaken must be widely known and practiced by peasants

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS: Means of Improvement and Advancement

1. Sanitation

(...) the construction of sources of drinking water that provide water to peasant communities during the dry season, when most of the streams that provide water to peasants in the lands of the Pacific coast dry up, and drainage systems that prevent rainwater from remaining stagnant during the rainy season, is one of the most urgent tasks to achieve human, plant, and animal health conditions in the countryside. Irrigation systems for the irrigation of crops during the dry season, are plant health and

2. Instruction

An efficient Agricultural Extension Service, which, while providing instruction, makes available to peasants the material, technical, and financial facilities so that they follow the instructions received, constitutes the type of education that the rural population needs.

Agricultural cooperatives can be a recommendable complement to the Extension Service.

The education in agriculture, rural improvement, and cooperatives provided by the Extension Service influences both adolescent and adult farmers, and improves farms by providing instruction to adult farmers, their wives, and farm households. (...) The immigration of farmers should be considered a very efficient means of educating native farmers.

3. Transportation

Agricultural credit programs with the specific purpose of having farmers purchase pack mules, build warehouses for agricultural products where country roads join the highway, and purchase freight trucks that pick up products from where the mules drop them off and take them to consumer markets would partially alleviate the transportation problem, while the rural economy develops sufficiently to justify the construction of roads;

4. Organization of production, sales, and credit

Organizing production, sales, and credit for farmers is a gigantic undertaking. (...)

The Agricultural Extension Service, with the financial, technical, legal, and moral capacity to organize agricultural production, transportation, sales, and credit for the rural population, based on cooperatives, would greatly help the country move its peasantry from a relatively self-sufficient economy and social life to a more productive and unique economy and social life, both economically and socially.

Patriotic Youth Front

The Patriotic Youth Front emerged as a civic organization in 1944, following the First National Student Congress held in our country in February of that year.

En diciembre de 1947, en c

With the Student Federation and the Educators' Association, it was a bastion of the defense of national sovereignty, forcing the Legislature to reject the Philosophical Bases

Convenio de

WHY THE CONVENTION SHOULD BE REJECTED TODAY (Filós-Hines)

1. Because it violates the General of 1936, since there is no danger of aggression the Republic of Panama or the security of neutrality of the Panama Canal (Article X of the 1936 Treaty)

2. Because almost all of its Articles are harmful to our sovereignty (Articles III, IV, X, XII, and II of the Convention)

3. Because it designates, without consultation, the local Commander of the United States Army or the person to whom he delegates his representation to ensure the sovereignty of Panama (Article III)

4. Because it allows the occupation of of the entire Republic by the United States Army, allowing it to obstruct all the highways and roads of the Republic (Article X)

5. Because it allows the United States to occupy other sites for the installation of radiocommunication services, which are not specified in the Annex to the Convention, which establishes that only the sites specified in the Annex will be occupied (Articles XII, VI, VII, and DX)

6. Because it exempts all civilian employees, including contractors, who work at said defense sites from paying taxes, despite the fact that the Convention states that Panama retains its sovereignty over the sites in question (Article III)

7. Because it does not ensure job opportunities for Panamanians at said sites (Articles III and IV)

8. Because it does not ensure a market for the sale of national products that could be produced there

9. Because it allows the importation and sale of all kinds of articles at said sites without the obligation to pay any contribution or tax; it only requires the suppression of smuggling (Article XIII)

10. Because it allows the United States to redesign the carreteras nacionales (Artículo X)

11. Because it allows the occupation of a site that, even in wartime, was not considered necessary for the defense of the Republic or the Canal (See Annex on the sites to be occupied)

12. Because the National Government will have to make disbursements of sums greater than those that, according to the Agreement, the United States must pay for the maintenance of the highways and roads used by its troops, most of which will not benefit us in any way. (Article X)

13. Because regarding criminal jurisdiction in defense sites, Panama only retains it over Panamanians who commit a crime or misdemeanor there; foreigners, on the other hand, guilty of crimes or misdemeanors, will be tried and punished in accordance with the laws of

the United States by the authorities correspondientes de los Estados Unidos (Article V)

14. Because it does not establish that the 1942 Agreement ended on September 1, 1946, or that it has ceased to have effect.

15. Because even if there were a threat of aggression against Panama or the Canal, it does not stipulate that said Agreement is in development of Article X of the General Treaty of 1936.

16. Because if the principle of threat of aggression were accepted, the futuras ocupaciones del territorio nacional de doors are open for conformity with Article X of the General Treaty of 1936.

17. Because if the Filós-Hines Agreement only imposes obligations on Panama, none of its defenders has been able to point out a single convenience for the country's interests.

La Hora, Panama, December 22, 1947

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